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CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Rupee touches 80-mark for the first time

For the first time, the rupee declined to the low level of 80 against the US dollar in intra-day spot trading on Monday. The rupee ended the day's trading session at 79.98, registering a fall of 16 paise over its previous close of 79.82. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 79.76 against the greenback, but lost ground to touch the psychological low mark of 80 against the American currency.

(From left) Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress president Sonia Gandhi, Former PM Manmohan Singh and Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai cast their ballot for the presidential elections on Monday | SHEKHAR YADAV/EPS

Bit of cross-voting spices up presidential elections

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

WHILE presidential elections on Monday went largely on expected lines, three Lok Sabha MPs abstained and there were reports of cross-voting in a few states, adding a bit of spice in an otherwise predictable poll.

There are five vacancies in the Rajya Sabha, so they were as many fewer votes. The identity of the three abstaining Lower House MPs could not be ascertained since the election was by secret ballot.

There were reports of cross-voting in at least six states. In Maharashtra, three MLAs — one from the Congress and two from Sharad Pawar's NCP — claimed on record that they voted for NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu.

In Gujarat, the sole NCP legislator, Kandhal Jadeja went on record to say he voted for Murmu. Gujarat NCP president Jayant Patel 'Bosky' promptly sought an explanation from Jadeja. The party had not issued a whip, although its legislators were instructed orally to vote for the joint Opposition candidate Yashwant Sinha.

Another NCP MLA, Kamlesh Singh from Jharkhand, cast his ballot in favour of Murmu.

Haryana Congress MLA Kuldeep Bishnoi, who cross-voted in last month's Rajya Sabha polls, said he voted according to his conscience. Indicating that he cast his ballot in favour of Murmu, Bishnoi said, "Like in Rajya Sabha, I have cast my vote in this election too as per my conscience."

Hitting out at the Opposition nominee Yashwant Sinha for allegedly once calling SP patriarch Mulayam Singh Yadav an "ISI agent", Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party chief Shivpal Yadav said, "Hardcore SP leaders, those who follow Netaji's principles, will never support a candidate who leveled such allegations." However, the SP was committed to support Sinha.

In Assam, an AIUDF legislator Karimuddin Barbhuiya alleged that at least 20 Congress MLAs voted for Murmu. But Congress Legislature Party leader in Assam Debabrata Saikia called the claim absurd.

NUMBERS THAT MATTER

4,796 electors
in all in electoral college

31 polling stations
in all - at 30 state legislative assembly secretariats and one in Parliament House

44 MPs permitted
to vote at state headquarters. 9 MLAs at Parliament House and 2 MLAs in other state HQ

99%+ electors
cast their ballot

100% voting
in TN, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, MP, Manipur, Mizoram, Puducherry, Sikkim

M'luru: 30 co-passengers of second monkeypox patient home-isolated

VINCENT D'SOUZA @ Mangaluru

AS India's second case of monkeypox was reported from Kannur in Kerala after a 31-year old man tested positive on Monday, Mangaluru Health Department officials acted swiftly, traced his co-passengers and have put them in home isolation.

The 31-year-old had arrived at Mangaluru International Airport (MIA) from Dubai on July 13. According to Dr Rajesh, District Surveillance Officer, Dakshina Kannada, the person tested negative during the screening that was held at the airport soon after his arrival. However, after reaching his native Kannur in Kerala, he developed symptoms of the disease.

Dr Rajesh said 191 passengers had travelled with the patient on the Dubai flight but 34 passengers who travelled in the three front and back seats of the patient need to be isolated as per the protocol. Of the 34 passengers, 10 are from Mangaluru, 15 from Kannur and nine from Udupi. Of them, 30 have already been traced and told to isolate themselves at their respective homes for the next 21 days. The process of tracing the remaining four is under way.

Dr Rajesh said the isolated persons will be monitored on a daily basis and they will be shifted to the isolation ward in District Wenlock Hospital in Mangaluru if they show any symptoms of the disease. About a month ago, a 10-bed monkeypox isolation ward was opened at Wenlock Hospital.

The MIA has stepped up its screening procedures for all international arriving passengers as per the SOP given by the district health authorities. P5

EXPRESS READ

Girls forced to remove innerwear at NEET centre

Kollam: Angry parents are up in arms after girl students were allegedly forced to remove their innerwear before appearing for NEET at an exam centre in Kollam, Kerala, on Sunday. Following the uproar, the State Human Rights Commission has sought a report from the Kollam Rural SP. P5

Singer Bhupinder Singh passes away at 82

Mumbai: Legendary ghazal singer Bhupinder Singh, 82, died on Monday at a Mumbai hospital. Bhupinder was best known for songs such as *Duniya Chhute Yaar Na Chhute* (Dharam Kanta) & *Dil Dhoondta Hai* (Mausam).

CM to lead all-party team against Kasturirangan report

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

ELECTED representatives from Karnataka have strongly opposed the draft recommendations made by the K Kasturirangan Committee in its report declaring nearly 20,000 sq km of the Western Ghats as Eco-Sensitive Zone (ESZ). Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai will soon lead a delegation to the national capital to submit a memorandum to the Centre urging it not to go ahead with the implementation of the report.

Speaking to the media after a meeting with elected representatives from the districts likely to be impacted by the implementation of the report, Home Minister Araga Jnanendra said the delegation comprising legislators and MPs cutting across party lines will visit New Delhi on July 25 or 26 to submit a memorandum to the Union Environment Minister.

During the meeting that was also attended by CM Bommai, the legislators and MPs expressed anguish over the notification. The government has decided to take it up with the Centre as well fight it legally, the minister said, adding that they will also mobilise public opinion against the report.

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PARLIAMENT

Session start stormy, Oppn seeks debate on GST hike

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE first day of the monsoon session of Parliament saw the Opposition targeting the Centre over spiralling prices, the Agnipath job scheme and increase in GST rates on essential commodities.

Both the Houses saw noisy scenes with the Opposition demanding discussions on important issues.

The Lok Sabha was adjourned till 2 pm for MPs to vote in the presidential elections but during the second half, members pushed for discussions on inflation and Agnipath, leading to its adjournment for the day.

For his part, Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged all MPs to ensure the session is peaceful and productive. "Let's make best use of this session for national interest," he said. The Centre has listed 24 bills for the session ending on August 12.

CONTINUED ON: P9

KMF TRIMS PRICES

Bengaluru: The state-run Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) on Monday revised prices of its products, following directions from Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday. It has slashed prices of milk, curd and lassi ranging from ₹50 paise to a maximum of 1.50 depending on the volume. P4

SHRI DIGVIJAYA MOOLARAMA
VEDAVYASAAH VIJAYANTE

Sri Sri Satyatmateertha Swamiji
of Uttaradi Math

Is Celebrating
Annual Aradhana of
Shri Shri Jayateertharu
At - Moola Vrundavana Sannidhi,
Malakheda

On - 17, 18, 19 - July -2022

Programs : Moolarama Pooja, Panchamruta, Rathotsava
Lectures, Musical concerts